

# ***Readings Booklet***

***January 1994***



# ***English 30***

***Part B: Reading***

***Grade 12 Diploma Examination***

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**January 1994**  
**English 30 Part B: Reading**  
**Readings Booklet**  
**Grade 12 Diploma Examination**

*Description*

**Part B: Reading** contributes 50% of the total English 30 Diploma Examination mark.

There are 8 reading selections in the Readings Booklet and 70 questions in the Questions Booklet.

*Time allotted: 2 hours. You may take an additional 1/2 hour to complete the examination if needed.*

*Instructions*

- Be sure that you have an English 30 Readings Booklet **and** an English 30 Questions Booklet.
- You may **not** use a dictionary, thesaurus, or other reference materials.



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I. Questions 1 to 8 in your Questions Booklet are based on this essay.

### NORTH POLE NORTH LIGHT

I have always thought of Christmas as a pagan tapestry, the vehemence of its celebration colored with brilliance, with light. For a few short weeks in the middle of our winter, we illuminate every shadowed corner. When we string lights on our trees, when we embrace the bright packaging and carnival cheer of the season, we are enacting a northern country's incantation to the sun deity. We are really re-enacting the pagan ritual of burning our forests to bring back the sun.

Here, on the southern fringe of Canada, it is easy to believe that the sun will return. We see it every day; we *can* believe in it. But above the Arctic Circle, the end of December is literally the darkest time of year. The sun has slipped under the horizon, gone absent. And Christmas comes in the middle of a deep and palpable dark.

I spent last Christmas in that dark, at Polaris Mine (latitude 75°25' north) on Little Cornwallis Island, seven hours of flying time from my Calgary home, norther than Yellowknife, norther than Cambridge Bay, even norther than Resolute Bay. We southerners refer to a generic north, but it is a huge geographical area with its own zones: the near north is closest, boreal forest, accessible; the far north is beyond the tree line, tundra, a semi-arid desert. But the extreme north surpasses all imagining. It is the land that never melts, the hyper-region of the Arctic Islands, their shapes so familiar to us from the Cadbury's maps in our childhood classrooms, but so far from our ken. I would venture that fewer than one in a hundred Canadians has ever been there.

My husband works as a geologist at the mine on Little Cornwallis Island, a tiny scrap crouched behind the larger Cornwallis Island, facing Crozier Strait and next to McDougall Sound. Polaris is a lead-zinc mine, a year-round underground operation barely discernible on the wide and ice-bound reaches. And in December, Cominco Ltd. (which runs the mine) flies in its employees' families to celebrate Christmas at the North Pole.

Few of us—wives, husbands, children—knew what to expect. When the spider-webbed lights of Edmonton vanished below the plane, I knew that the long-since-faded sun of the short winter day was the last light I would see for two weeks. But Christmas at the pole was too fantastic to be missed. I wanted to go for obvious personal reasons, but also to consummate my yearning to enter that secret dreamland that is the north. I can honestly say that, as a writer, I have no interest in the political or economic presence of the north. Nor do I wish to appropriate the culture and the stories of the Inuit. That belongs to them. But I

*Continued*



crave the coarse, grainy texture and the biting smell of “north,” I want to thrust my hands into the strange power that makes me a *Canadian* writer. I have never been able to articulate this force, but I know it’s within *north*’s reach, where ice emits its own light, in the permafrost, and the fingermarks of glaciers, and the multiplied meanings of the word snow.

On the surface, the trip was like any other: flying by jet into Yellowknife, then Resolute, waiting in the cramped Resolute Airport for a smaller plane that would take us farther. But then, on the surface, magic is never visible. At five in the morning, when the Twin Otter bumped itself down the short, thinly marked runway at Polaris, and the back door was flung open, I dared to believe my own transportation to this polar world, the Arctic ice cap. We climbed out of the plane, and the cold there on the ground was solid—different from mere chilliness. Then into a yellow school bus, bizarrely out of place, plastered inside with decals and stickers by the workers who ride it from the accommodation building to the mine every day. We rumbled down a hill to the accommodation building, sitting on a low cliff above the edge of the ice-ridged Arctic Ocean. The storage shed and the other mine buildings were dotted with a few lights, but so far this small community seemed ghostly and imprecise, overwhelmed by the white around it and the dark above it.

The bus pulled up in front of the metal grille steps to the main door, which boasted POLARIS X0A 0Y0: Canada Post at its most unreachable. And beside this strange ship of shelter, cresting the white snow so bright it refracted darkness, an igloo’s perfectly curved roof mocked the ultra-technological building. It burned through the dark with its own secret shape.

Constant darkness robs time of meaning. In the few days before Christmas, it was hard to remember I was awake. I felt caught in the middle of a textured dream. I had found that fairy-tale country where Christmas originates. But no real Christmas trees, no stores, no lights, no hustle, no shopping. Only the north holding its breath, waiting for the sun to rise again.

There were about 200 people at Polaris. Although everyone had a private room, we ate together, played games together, planned Christmas. Hordes of children scampered up and down the endless hallways, went for skidozer rides, colored pictures of stockings and reindeer. It was strangely communal (food and working facilities are shared) and yet strangely private.

Alone in my room at noon, looking through the window into the snow-whipped darkness, it was easy to believe myself the only person alive on earth, and that the structure around me could vanish in one fierce swoop of the polar wind. It was dark when I awoke, dark at noon, dark at supper time. And yet everyone pretended it was daylight; the mine schedule went on implacably, as if it were in the south.

*Continued*

At first I wanted to sleep all the time. Then, when I'd grown accustomed to the building, when I'd been driven around the island, and toured ice-crystal caverns underground in the mine, I wanted to stay awake and watch for signs, mysterious happenings.

80 Schedules have to be imposed from without; the accepted rhythms of day and night, work and sleep, mean nothing there. And although the employees kept to their necessary schedules, I could sense that strange unhingement in the visitors—not craziness really, but freedom, a release. I found it in myself, suddenly able to read three times as fast. My body temperature seemed to drop. I wanted to eat fat  
85 and meat. I dreamed in color. I could see in the dark. Outside it was minus 40, too cold to breathe, too cold to even feel. And going outside was different—I bundled up not against the cold, but *for* it, as if we were lovers.

I had thought I would be homesick for Christmas in the south; I was wrong. There are no trees at Polaris, but the miners had tied strings of colored lights in a  
90 triangular shape atop the building. A magic tree above the tree line. Over the cafeteria entrance was a sign with an arrow: NORTH POLE. The children played games, made puzzles, asked anxiously: "Will Santa be able to find us here?" "Of course," we said. "He lives here." And sure enough, on Christmas morning, he came swinging in the door, with a huge belly and a sack full of toys.

95 Christmas has been packaged into inertia. Religious or commercial, our festival of light is frozen and immobile. There, at the pole, it came alive again for me. Yes, it was the same: Santa came; there were presents; we had Christmas dinner together, a big isolated family. But it was indelibly different. In that fantastic realm, on Christmas day, my husband and I went out into the wind and  
100 hunted for snow, tried to decipher the many shapes and forms it takes. We felt the cold with our lungs and our limbs, and felt the happiness of entering an unenterable world.

I carried away that and one other moment. On Christmas morning, everyone gathered in the dining room, its huge windows looking out into the starry darkness  
105 crouched there on the edge of the Arctic. We did not speak. Together, far away from the south and its narrow civilization, we celebrated a different Christmas. The snow flared with its own light, there in the great northern darkness, and burned with pagan brightness to bring back the sun.

*Aritha van Herk*

Alberta writer,  
now teaching at the University of Calgary



II. Questions 9 to 16 in your Questions Booklet are based on this poem.

TEN THOUSAND PIANOS

The Arctic is mostly silent in summer  
seals bark only at a distance  
from the rifle's mean crack  
or a motor's stutter  
5 breaking the blue glass of water  
In evening ducks mourn  
eerily their fate as ducks  
the killer whale ghosting along  
hiding beneath a dorsal fin  
10 soundless as words on paper  
Idling past a mile-wide iceberg  
in the canoe listening  
to meltwater dripping in the sea  
ice marries itself to water  
15 as red leaves float down in fall  
as snow or rain or lost words  
wandering beyond hearing  
Listen to your blood negotiate  
interior roads in the brain's back country  
20 or lying on your back in grass  
clouds buffet clouds in leaning silence  
under the upsidedown mountains  
I am an elderly boy come here  
to take piano lessons  
25 realizing one should be born  
in silence like a prolonged waiting  
after the first death-cry  
knowing this music  
is what silence is for  
30 in a canoe in Cumberland Sound  
waiting among the white islands  
for summer's slow departure

*Baffin Island*

*Al Purdy*  
Contemporary Canadian poet



III. Questions 17 to 26 in your Questions Booklet are based on this essay.

LIVING LIKE WEASELS

A weasel is wild. Who know what he thinks? He sleeps in his underground den, his tail draped over his nose. Sometimes he lives in his den for two days without leaving. Outside, he stalks rabbits, mice, muskrats, and birds, killing more bodies that he can eat warm, and often dragging the carcasses home. Obedient to  
5 instinct, he bites his prey at the neck, either splitting the jugular vein at the throat or crunching the brain at the base of the skull, and he does not let go. One naturalist refused to kill a weasel who was socketed into his hand deeply as a rattlesnake. The man could in no way pry the tiny weasel off, and he had to walk half a mile to water, the weasel dangling from his palm, and soak him off like a stubborn label.

10 And once, says Ernest Thompson Seton<sup>1</sup>—once, a man shot an eagle out of the sky. He examined the eagle and found the dry skull of a weasel fixed by the jaws to his throat. The supposition is that the eagle had pounced on the weasel and the weasel swiveled and bit as instinct taught him, tooth to neck, and nearly won. I would like to have seen that eagle from the air a few weeks or months before he was  
15 shot: was the whole weasel still attached to his feathered throat, a fur pendant? Or did the eagle eat what he could reach, gutting the living weasel with his talons before his breast, bending his beak, cleaning the beautiful airborne bones?

I have been reading about weasels because I saw one last week. I startled a weasel who startled me, and we exchanged a long glance.

20 Twenty minutes from my house, through the woods by the quarry and across the highway, is Hollins Pond, a remarkable piece of shallowness, where I like to go at sunset and sit on a tree trunk. Hollins Pond is also called Murray's Pond; it covers two acres of bottomland near Tinker Creek with six inches of water and six thousand lily pads. In winter, brown-and-white steers stand in the middle of it,  
25 merely dampening their hooves; from the distant shore they look like miracle itself, complete with miracle's nonchalance. Now, in summer, the steers are gone. The water lilies have blossomed and spread to a green horizontal plane that is terra firma<sup>2</sup> to plodding blackbirds, and tremulous<sup>3</sup> ceiling to black leeches, crayfish, and carp.

30 This is, mind you, suburbia. It is a five-minute walk in three directions to rows of houses, though none is visible here. There's a 55 mph highway at one end of the pond, and a nesting pair of wood ducks at the other. Under every bush is a muskrat hole or a beer can. The far end is an alternating series of fields and woods, fields and woods, threaded everywhere with motorcycle tracks—in whose bare clay wild  
35 turtles lay eggs.

*Continued*

<sup>1</sup>Ernest Thompson Seton—English writer of nature stories

<sup>2</sup>terra firma—solid ground

<sup>3</sup>tremulous—trembling, quivering

So. I had crossed the highway, stepped over two low barbed-wire fences, and traced the motorcycle path in all gratitude through the wild rose and poison ivy of the pond's shoreline up into high grassy fields. Then I cut down through the woods to the mossy fallen tree where I sit. This tree is excellent. It makes a dry,  
40 upholstered bench at the upper, marshy end of the pond, a plush jetty raised from the thorny shore between a shallow blue body of water and a deep blue body of sky.

The sun had just set. I was relaxed on the tree trunk, ensconced in the lap of lichen, watching the lily pads at my feet tremble and part dreamily over the  
45 thrusting path of a carp. A yellow bird appeared to my right and flew behind me. It caught my eye; I swiveled around—and the next instant, inexplicably, I was looking down at a weasel, who was looking up at me.

Weasel! I'd never seen one wild before. He was ten inches long, thin as a curve, a muscled ribbon, brown as fruitwood, soft-furred, alert. His face was fierce,  
50 small and pointed as a lizard's; he would have made a good arrowhead. There was just a dot of chin, maybe two brown hairs' worth, and then the pure white fur began that spread down his underside. He had two black eyes I didn't see, any more than you see a window.

The weasel was stunned into stillness as he was emerging from beneath an  
55 enormous shaggy wild rose bush four feet away. I was stunned into stillness twisted backward on the tree trunk. Our eyes locked, and someone threw away the key. Our look was as if two lovers, or deadly enemies, met unexpectedly on an overgrown path when each had been thinking of something else: a clearing blow to the gut. It was also a bright blow to the brain, or a sudden beating of brains, with all  
60 the charge and intimate grate of rubbed balloons. It emptied our lungs. It felled the forest, moved the fields, and drained the pond; the world dismantled and tumbled into that black hole of eyes. If you and I looked at each other that way, our skulls would split and drop to our shoulders. But we don't. We keep our skulls. So.

He disappeared. This was only last week, and already I don't remember what  
65 shattered the enchantment. I think I blinked, I think I retrieved my brain from the weasel's brain, and tried to memorize what I was seeing, and the weasel felt the yank of separation, the careening splashdown into real life and the urgent current of instinct. He vanished under the wild rose. I waited motionless, my mind suddenly full of data and my spirit with pleadings, but he didn't return.

Please do not tell me about "approach-avoidance conflicts." I tell you I've  
70 been in that weasel's brain for sixty seconds, and he was in mine. Brains are private places, muttering through unique and secret tapes—but the weasel and I both plugged into another tape simultaneously, for a sweet and shocking time. Can I help it if it was a blank?

75 What goes on in his brain the rest of the time? What does a weasel think

*Continued*



about? He won't say. His journal is tracks in clay, a spray of feathers, mouse blood and bone: uncollected, unconnected, loose-leaf, and blown.

I would like to learn, or remember, how to live. I come to Hollins Pond not so much to learn how to live as, frankly, to forget about it. That is, I don't think I can  
80 learn from a wild animal how to live in particular—shall I suck warm blood, hold my tail high, walk with my footprints precisely over the prints of my hands?—but I might learn something of mindlessness, something of the purity of living in the physical senses and the dignity of living without bias or motive. The weasel lives in necessity and we live in choice, hating necessity and dying at the last ignobly in its  
85 talons. I would like to live as I should, as the weasel lives as he should. And I suspect that for me the way is like the weasel's: open to time and death painlessly, noticing everything, remembering nothing, choosing the given with a fierce and pointed will.

I missed my chance. I should have gone for the throat. I should have lunged  
90 for that streak of white under the weasel's chin and held on, held on through mud and into the wild rose, held on for a dearer life. We could live under the wild rose wild as weasels, mute and uncomprehending. I could very calmly go wild. I could live two days in the den, curled, leaning on mouse fur, sniffing bird bones, blinking, licking, breathing musk, my hair tangled in the roots of grasses. Down is a good  
95 place to go, where the mind is single. Down is out, out of your ever-loving mind and back to your careless senses. I remember muteness as a prolonged and giddy fast, where every moment is a feast, ingested directly, like blood pulsed into my gut through a jugular vein. Could two live that way? Could two live under the wild rose, and explore by the pond, so that the smooth mind of each is as everywhere  
100 present to the other, and as received and as unchallenged, as falling snow?

We could, you know. We can live any way we want. People take vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience—even of silence—by choice. The thing is to stalk your calling in a certain skilled and supple way, to locate the most tender and live spot and plug into that pulse. This is yielding, not fighting. A weasel doesn't  
105 "attack" anything; a weasel lives as he's meant to, yielding at every moment to the perfect freedom of single necessity.

I think it would be well, and proper, and obedient, and pure, to grasp your one necessity and not let it go, to dangle from it limp wherever it takes you. Then even death, where you're going no matter how you live, cannot you part. Seize it and let  
110 it seize you up aloft even, till your eyes burn out and drop; let your musky flesh fall off in shreds, and let your very bones unhinge and scatter, loosened over fields, over fields and woods, lightly, thoughtless, from any height at all, from as high as eagles.

*Annie Dillard*  
Contemporary American writer

IV. Questions 27 to 37 in your Questions Booklet are based on this excerpt from the play *The Winter's Tale*.

from THE WINTER'S TALE, Act II, scene i

**CHARACTERS:**

LEONTES—King of Sicilia

HERMIONE—wife of Leontes

LADIES—attendants to the Queen

LORDS—attendants to the King

POLIXENES—King of Bohemia and long-time friend of Leontes

MAMILLIUS—young son of Hermione and Leontes

*For nearly a year, LEONTES and HERMIONE have been hosts to POLIXENES. HERMIONE is about to give birth to her second child. LEONTES has misinterpreted his wife's graciousness as a hostess to POLIXENES as infidelity. In a fit of jealous rage, he ordered his councillor, CAMILLO, to poison POLIXENES. Instead, CAMILLO warned POLIXENES to return to Bohemia and then escaped with him. As this scene begins, LEONTES and his attendants enter a room in the palace where HERMIONE and her LADIES have been playing with MAMILLIUS. LEONTES questions his attendants on the whereabouts of POLIXENES.*

**LEONTES:** Was he met there? his train?<sup>1</sup> Camillo with him?

**FIRST LORD:** Behind the tuft of pines I met them; never

Saw I men scour so on their way. I ey'd

Them even to their ships.

5 **LEONTES:** How blest am I

In my just censure, in my true opinion!

Alack, for lesser knowledge! How accurs'd

Is being so blest! There may be in the cup

A spider steep'd, and one may drink, depart,

10 And yet partake no venom, for his knowledge

Is not infected; but if one present

Th' abhorr'd ingredient to his eye, make known

How he hath drunk, he cracks his gorge, his sides,

With violent hefts. I have drunk, and seen the spider.

15 Camillo was his help in this, his pander.

There is a plot against my life, my crown.

*Continued*

<sup>1</sup>train—entourage, party of attendants



All's true that is mistrusted. That false villain  
 Whom I employ'd was pre-employ'd by him.  
 He has discover'd my design, and I  
 20 Remain a pinch'd thing; yea, a very trick  
 For them to play at will. How came the posterns<sup>2</sup>  
 So easily open?  
**FIRST LORD:** By his great authority;  
 Which often hath no less prevail'd than so  
 25 On your command.  
**LEONTES:** I know't too well.  
 Give me the boy.<sup>3</sup> I am glad you did not nurse him.  
 Though he does bear some signs of me, yet you  
 Have too much blood in him.  
 30 **HERMIONE:** What is this? Sport?  
**LEONTES:** Bear the boy hence; he shall not come about her.  
 Away with him! and let her sport herself  
 With that she's big with; for 'tis Polixenes  
 Has made thee swell thus.  
 35 **HERMIONE:** But I'd say he had not,  
 And I'll be sworn you would believe my saying,  
 Howe'er you lean to th'nayward.  
**LEONTES:** You, my lords,  
 Look on her, mark her well; be but about  
 40 To say she is a goodly lady, and  
 The justice of your hearts will thereto add  
 'Tis pity she's not honest,<sup>4</sup> honorable.  
 Praise her but for this her without-door<sup>5</sup> form,  
 Which on my faith deserves high speech, and straight  
 45 The shrug, the hum or haw, these petty brands  
 That calumny<sup>6</sup> doth use—O, I am out—  
 That mercy does, for calumny will sear  
 Virtue itself; these shrugs, these hums and haws  
 When you have said she's goodly, come between  
 50 Ere you can say she's honest: but be't known,

*Continued*

<sup>2</sup>posterns—palace gates

<sup>3</sup>the boy—Mamillius. Leontes is speaking to Hermione

<sup>4</sup>honest—chaste

<sup>5</sup>without-door—outward

<sup>6</sup>calumny—slander

From him that has most cause to grieve it should be,  
She's an adultress.

**HERMIONE:** Should a villain say so,  
The most replenish'd villain in the world,  
55 He were as much more villain: you, my lord,  
Do but mistake.

**LEONTES:** You have mistook, my lady,  
Polixenes for Leontes. O thou thing!  
Which I'll not call a creature of thy place,<sup>7</sup>  
60 Lest barbarism, making me the precedent,  
Should a like language use to all degrees,  
And mannerly distinguishment leave out  
Betwixt the prince and beggar. I have said  
She's an adultress; I have said with whom;  
65 More, she's a traitor, and Camillo is  
A [fedary] with her, and one that knows  
What she should shame to know herself  
But with her most vile principal, that she's  
A bed-swerger, even as bad as those  
70 That vulgars give bold'st titles; ay, and privy  
To this their late escape.

**HERMIONE:** No, by my life,  
Privy to none of this. How will this grieve you,  
When you shall come to clearer knowledge, that  
75 You thus have publish'd me! Gentle, my lord,  
You scarce can right me thoroughly then to say  
You did mistake.

**LEONTES:** No; if I mistake  
In those foundations which I build upon,  
80 The centre<sup>8</sup> is not big enough to bear  
A school-boy's top. Away with her, to prison!  
He who shall speak for her is afar off guilty  
But that he speaks.

**HERMIONE:** There's some ill planet reigns;  
85 I must be patient till the heavens look  
With an aspect more favourable. Good my lords,  
I am not prone to weeping, as our sex

*Continued*

<sup>7</sup>Which I'll not call a creature of thy place—a term I'll not apply to one of your rank

<sup>8</sup>centre—earth



Commonly are, the want of which vain dew  
Perchance shall dry your pities; but I have  
90 That honourable grief lodg'd here which burns  
Worse than tears drown. Beseech you all, my lords,  
With thoughts so qualified as your charities  
Shall best instruct you, measure me; and so  
The King's will be perform'd!  
95 **LEONTES:** Shall I be heard?  
**HERMIONE:** Who is't that goes with me? Beseech your Highness,  
My women may be with me; for you see  
My plight requires it. Do not weep, good fools;  
There is no cause. When you shall know your mistress  
100 Has deserv'd prison, then abound in tears  
As I come out; this action I now go on  
Is for my better grace. Adieu, my lord.  
I never wish'd to see you sorry; now  
I trust I shall. My women, come; you have leave.  
105 **LEONTES:** Go, do our bidding; hence!  
*[Exit QUEEN guarded, with ladies]*

*William Shakespeare*

V. Questions 38 to 46 in your Questions Booklet are based on this story.

A SMALL CEREMONY

He put the large flight bag and the briefcase out into the hall and started to lock the door. Then he stopped and with the tips of his fingers pushed the door open. He stood looking at the now empty room. Naked white book shelves, smooth, tightly wrapped bed, empty desk, empty window ledge (so recently  
5 cleared of two stale beers and a box of crackers). Not a speck of himself remained in the room.

Where then had he gone?

For surely this self who was leaving—this man standing on a doorstep in fawn drip-dry slacks and blue pullover, this owner of a Samsonite<sup>1</sup> flight bag and  
10 leather briefcase containing (carefully folded in tissue) two certificates declaring to the world that Toma Dakannah was a B.Sc., and an M.D.—surely this man of careful vowels and shuttered eyes was not the same who had (despite his black serge suit and white shirt) danced around and around this room the first time he'd come into it over five years ago? Where then had the other gone?

15 He would have liked to walk across the room and scratch his name in the glass window, "Toma Dakannah was here!" He'd seen white students do things like that and wondered at their childishness—"Look on my works you mighty . . ." <sup>2</sup> Was that what they had been trying to say too? But it was late to begin understanding white men. He shrugged, smiled at the empty room where he  
20 had been safe, and sometimes happy, closed and carefully locked the door.

He walked down the three flights of stairs to the residence office but did not meet anyone he recognized. The office was quiet and cool, the white woman looked up from her desk, "Yes?"

"I have come to return my key and pay my fees."

25 He watched as she flicked through the green cards; she did not find a name that matched his face for her and turned to him, irritation twitching across her mouth, "Your name please?"

"Toma Dakannah," he said very carefully, and spelled, "D a k a n n a h."

He thought the woman flushed a little and was glad—after five years she  
30 should know his name!

There should be some ceremony, he thought. But there is no ceremony.

*Continued*

<sup>1</sup>Samsonite—expensive hardsided luggage, popular in the '50s and '60s

<sup>2</sup>Look on my works, you mighty . . .—from Shelley's poem "Ozymandias," which is about the human need to be acknowledged and significant. The line is "Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"

He remembered the ceremonies when he left home. His teachers' long lectures when he'd gotten the scholarship—he must now represent all the other boys who had written the test and not gotten a scholarship, and their parents, and his parents, and his teachers. He must do his very best for all of them.

And his father's own ceremony—the long bus trip. In a rickety yellow bus that pulled away from their own civil servant neighbourhood, then through the tin shacks at the outskirts of town, away from the town itself and out across the flatland. He and his father rode half the day, dressed in their starched white shirts, their best dark suits gathering a fine powder of dust. Going to see the old man who was his grandfather. An old man in an orange cloth, who sat outside a white-washed hut gazing at the far hills. His father had wanted some blessing, some sign that the old man approved, or at least recognized this miracle. His grandson was going to university—a foreign university. But the old man had given no blessing, no sign, no approval. He sat there smoking and looking out over the land he had once hunted across, a land he had stood in the centre of and thought endless.

After a while they left. The ride home was long and silent, but “He always was a stubborn old man,” his father had said, with some pride, just before they reached their own stop.

Toma Dakannah counted out the change for the residence office woman, she pressed the right buttons and slid him the receipt across the black glass countertop—her fingers did not quite touch his.

He wished there was one person he could say goodbye to—he reviewed quickly the names of his teachers and classmates—but there was no one! No one he knew well enough to say, “I’m afraid.”

“I would like three of these,” he pointed to a display of garish postcards, showing the campus in winter, the blood red brick festooned with loops of snow and blue-black swirls of snow behind. “Thank you,” he said and carefully tucked the cards into his case.

“I am leaving today,” he told the woman behind the counter. She smiled hesitantly, not sure what comment was appropriate.

He would go to see his grandfather again. Maybe the old man would let him live in the hut for a little while—he would like for a time to sleep in a white-washed house and to look out across the plain.

But even as he turned to pick up his suitcase he knew the thought to be mere fancy for him—there would be no nights in a cool hut, no days to sit dreaming over the flatland.

The old man had known that all along.

*Bernice Morgan*  
Contemporary Canadian writer



**VI. Questions 47 to 55 in your Questions Booklet are based on this excerpt from the play *The Way of the World*.**

**from THE WAY OF THE WORLD**

*The comedies of the Restoration Age (late 17th century) were written for a small and sophisticated social set of English ladies and gentlemen who indulged themselves with fine food, clothes, and love intrigues, and complimented themselves on being skilled in the arts of idle conversation and precise etiquette. The plots of most restoration comedies mirror the love triangles and contrived manners of the audiences who originally viewed them.*

*In this scene we meet MR. MIRABELL and MRS.<sup>1</sup> MILLAMANT, two lovers who strike a marriage bargain. MIRABELL and MILLAMANT are well aware of the way of their world.*

**MRS. MILLAMANT:** Ah! I'll never marry unless I am first made sure of my will and pleasure.

**MR. MIRABELL:** Would you have 'em both before marriage? Or will you be contented with the first now, and stay for the other till after grace?

5 **MRS. MILLAMANT:** Ah! Don't be impertinent—My dear liberty, shall I leave thee? My faithful solitude, my darling contemplation, must I bid you then adieu? Ay-h adieu—my morning thoughts, agreeable wakings, indolent slumbers, all *ye douceurs, ye sommeils du matin, adieu*<sup>2</sup>—I can't do't, 'tis more than impossible—Positively, Mirabell, I'll lie abed in a morning as long as I please.

**MR. MIRABELL:** Then I'll get up in a morning as early as I please.

**MRS. MILLAMANT:** Ah? Idle creature, get up when you will—and d'ye hear, I won't be called names after I'm married; positively, I won't be called names.

**MR. MIRABELL:** Names!

15 **MRS. MILLAMANT:** Aye, as wife, spouse, my dear, joy, jewel, love, sweetheart, and the rest of that nauseous cant,<sup>3</sup> in which men and their wives are so fulsomely familiar—and I shall never bear that. Good Mirabell, don't let us be familiar or fond, nor kiss before folks, like my Lady Fadler and Sir Francis, nor go to Hyde Park together the first Sunday in a new chariot, to  
20 provoke eyes and whispers, and then never be seen there together again, as if we were proud of one another the first week, and ashamed of one another ever after. Let us never visit together, nor go to a play together, but let us be

*Continued*

<sup>1</sup>MRS.—shortened form of Mistress, a title of courtesy attached to a mature woman, married or unmarried

<sup>2</sup>*ye douceurs, ye sommeils du matin, adieu*—sweet treats, morning sleep-ins, good-bye

<sup>3</sup>cant—slang, jargon, vernacular

- very strange and well-bred. Let us be as strange as if we had been married a great while, and as well-bred as if we were not married at all.
- 25 **MR. MIRABELL:** Have you any more conditions to offer? Hitherto your demands are pretty reasonable.
- MRS. MILLAMANT:** Trifles—as liberty to pay and receive visits to and from whom I please; to write and receive letters, without interrogatories or wry faces on your part; to wear what I please, and choose conversation with
- 30 regard only to my own taste; to have no obligation upon me to converse with wits that I don't like, because they are your acquaintance; or to be intimate with fools, because they may be your relations. Come to dinner when I please; dine in my dressing-room when I'm out of humor, without giving a reason. To have my closet inviolate; to be sole empress of my tea-table,
- 35 which you must never presume to approach without first asking leave. And lastly, wherever I am, you shall always knock at the door before you come in. These articles subscribed, if I continue to endure you a little longer, I may by degrees dwindle into a wife.
- MR. MIRABELL:** Your bill of fare is something advanced in this latter account.
- 40 Well, have I liberty to offer conditions—that when you are dwindled into a wife, I may not be beyond measure enlarged into a husband?
- MRS. MILLAMANT:** You have free leave. Propose your utmost; speak and spare not.
- MR. MIRABELL:** I thank you. *Imprimis*<sup>4</sup> then, I covenant that your acquaintance
- 45 be general, that you admit no sworn confidante or intimate of your own sex—no she-friend to screen her affairs under your countenance, and tempt you to make a trial of mutual secrecy. No decoy-duck to wheedle you a fop-scrambling to the play in a mask, then bring you home in a pretended fright, when you think you shall be found out, and rail at me for missing the play
- 50 and disappointing the frolic which you had, to pick me up and prove my constancy.
- MRS. MILLAMANT:** Detestable *imprimis*! I go to the play in a mask!
- MR. MIRABELL:** Item, I article that you continue to like your own face as long as I shall; and while it passes current with me, that you endeavor not to new-
- 55 coin it. To which end, together with all vizards<sup>5</sup> for the day, I prohibit all masks for the night, made of oiled-skins and I know not what—hog's bones, hare's gall, pig-water, and the marrow of a roasted cat. In short, I forbid all commerce with the gentlewoman in what-d'ye-call-it Court. Item, I shut my

*Continued*

<sup>4</sup>*Imprimis*—first, in the first place

<sup>5</sup>vizards—visors, masks

60 doors against all bawds with baskets, and pennyworths of muslin, china, fans, atlases, etc.—Item, when you shall be breeding—

MRS. MILLAMANT: Ah! Name it not.

MR. MIRABELL: Which may be presumed, with a blessing on our endeavors—

MRS. MILLAMANT: Odious endeavors!

65 MR. MIRABELL: I denounce against all strait lacing, squeezing for a shape, till you mold my boy's head like a sugar-loaf, and instead of a man-child, make me a father to a crooked billet. Lastly, to the dominion of the tea-table I submit—but with proviso,<sup>6</sup> that you exceed not in your province, but restrain yourself to native and simple tea-table drinks, as tea, chocolate, and coffee; as

70 likewise to genuine and authorized tea-table talk—such as mending of fashions, spoiling reputations, railing at absent friends, and so forth—but that on no account you encroach upon the men's prerogative,<sup>7</sup> and presume to drink healths, or toast fellows; for prevention of which I banish all foreign forces and all auxiliaries to the tea-table, as orange-brandy, all aniseed, cinnamon, citron, and Barbadoes waters, together with ratafia,<sup>8</sup> and the most

75 noble spirit of clary,<sup>9</sup> but for cowslip wine, poppy water, and all dormitives,<sup>10</sup> those I allow. These provisos admitted, in other things I may prove a tractable<sup>11</sup> and complying husband.

MRS. MILLAMANT: O horrid provisos! Filthy strong-waters! I toast fellows! Odious men! I hate your odious provisos.

80 MR. MIRABELL: Then we're agreed. Shall I kiss your hand upon the contract?

*William Congreve*  
18th-century English dramatist

<sup>6</sup>proviso—qualifying condition of a document or agreement

<sup>7</sup>prerogative—privilege, power, right

<sup>8</sup>ratafia—a liqueur

<sup>9</sup>clary—claret, a dry red wine

<sup>10</sup>dormitives—sleep-inducing drinks

<sup>11</sup>tractable—obedient, docile, submissive



**VII. Questions 56 to 64 in your Questions Booklet are based on this excerpt from the novel *The Betrayal*.**

**from THE BETRAYAL**

*The narrator, Mark, is relating the story of Theodore Stappler as Stappler recalls it to him. As a Jew in Nazi Germany, Stappler had entrusted his life and his mother's life to Joseph Held. The excerpt begins with the narrator describing the day that Stappler discovered Held had betrayed him.*

He looked at his watch and saw that the train was due to leave in fifteen minutes, and he began to run and felt the pain in his side again, though not so severe as it has been before, but in any case he paid no attention to it but kept on running. Then he came to the main street again, and here the crowd was so dense that he had to slow up, and then at last he saw the station and looked at his watch and saw that he still had ten minutes left. Unless, of course, Held had already been there before him.

He began to run again, pushing his way through the crowd. As soon as he entered the station, he saw that it was filled with uniformed men, soldiers, policemen, and stormtroopers in their brown shirts, and he was suddenly afraid. It was, said Theodore Stappler to me, impossible for him to describe the dreadful panic that came over him.

I thought back to the moment when we had first hit the beach in Sicily, and I understood what he meant. For I, too, had known fear and even panic. But I was in the company of friends and comrades, and we had drawn strength and sustenance from each other's fear and so had conquered our fear. But he was utterly alone, dependent solely on himself.

I looked at him as he sat there, in my comfortable apartment, his face now almost ashen-white, drawn in remembered pain, and I knew all at once that he had failed to rise there in that station, that his fear had conquered him, and that it was this knowledge he had had to live with since that day. I knew and my heart went out to him, and I leaned forward and touched his knee lightly with my hand. He seemed to understand what I meant by the gesture, for a fleeting smile crossed his grave face.

"I was also afraid once," I said.

"Everybody is afraid," he answered harshly. "But that is not an excuse."

"You judge too harshly," I said.

"Wait," he said.

It seemed suddenly to be unbearably hot in the apartment, and I became aware of sweat under my armpits and at the back of my neck, and I wished he would get the thing over with and tell me at once the brutal facts which I already surmised, already knew in my heart, as one foresees the destruction of a tragic hero and sits in horrid fascination and longs to cry out a warning, but knows it would be pointless.

*Continued*

"I know now, knew of course very soon after," Theodore Stappler continued his account of that crucial event, "that I had five minutes to run out on the platform and rush to our carriage and get six people off the train. It would have been enough  
35 time. But I did nothing. I stood paralysed. Because a policeman stood at the gate leading to the platform and I was afraid. Yet when I finally moved, he didn't even attempt to stop me.

"But listen, Mark!" he cried out to me. "Listen! When I finally moved towards him, he didn't do anything to stop me. He just moved aside and let me go past the  
40 gate. But it was too late. Because when I got on the platform, I saw a group of policemen coming through another entrance, and they were led by the same officer who had sat with Held, and with them there was Held himself. They were ahead of me, and so cut me off from the carriage. And Held walked with them, he led the way. He walked with them!"

Theodore Stappler's voice rose and he was quite beside himself. He jumped up  
45 from his chair and began to pace about the room, like a caged animal. He closed his hands and opened them, closed them and opened them. And then he stopped by my chair and seemed to tower over me, and his finger jabbed the air and pointed towards me, as if he were trying to accuse me, as if I, in fact, were Held, although it  
50 was also clear to me that his fury was really directed against himself as much as against Held.

"The traitor!" he cried. "He walked with them!"

I tried to calm him, and I touched him gently on the arm, but he brushed my  
hand aside.

In a low voice, hoarse with emotion, he went on to tell how he had watched  
55 them march along the platform, and when they came to the carriage where his mother and the others were, Held stopped, and the detachment stopped, too, but Held alone entered the carriage, to carry out the last step of whatever infernal bargain he had made. Outside, on the platform, the policemen waited.

Time passed. The train should already have left, but clearly there had been  
60 orders that it should not leave. What was happening inside the carriage?

Quickly, as if they sensed that there was some sport afoot, a crowd gathered. They joked and shouted and jostled against each other. Men picked up children and  
65 sat them on their shoulders, so that they might see better whatever it was that was about to happen. And Theodore Stappler stood at the back of the crowd and watched helplessly.

All at once Held appeared and got off the train, and behind him the others. Theodore Stappler's mother came last. As soon as they were all on the platform,  
70 and as if by a prearranged signal, the policemen surrounded them and began to push them on. One of the women began to scream hysterically and nearly fainted, but one of the policemen propped her up and half dragged her along the platform.

The crowd, suddenly aware that people were being arrested, began to shout and

*Continued*

hoot at them.

75 One of the policemen put his arm on Theodore Stappler's mother, but she shook him off with such an imperious gesture that he withdrew his hand in surprise. And she walked on between two policemen, with pride and with her head held high, and when Theodore Stappler saw this he tried to cry out, to shout to her, but his throat was so constricted, as if a man's fist were choking it, that he could make no sound. Only a weak moan came from him.

80 Did she see him there, standing on the platform? He would never know. For suddenly he felt himself go limp; his knees buckled under him, and he dragged himself to the back and leaned against the stone wall there and closed his eyes and prayed that the earth would open and swallow him up.

Then they were gone.

85 There was a blast from the engine whistle, and the train began slowly to move on towards the French border and to Paris beyond.

The crowd dispersed. And Theodore Stappler heard, vaguely, as if in a dream, a man say to his child that this was how spies were caught, and that that was how the country was protected. Now these people would not be able to take their secrets  
90 and give them away to their nation's enemies.

Then, in a sudden rush, Theodore Stappler ran out of the station, into the street, thinking that perhaps he might yet see them. But they were gone. And forever after he would have to live with the knowledge that he might have saved them or at least might have shared their fate.

95 "But could you really have saved them?" I asked him. "Would you not have been found?"

"Not necessarily," he said. "I did after all save myself. We could have hidden somewhere. I don't think they would have gone searching for us. Not at that time. But all that is idle speculation. I didn't do anything. I just lost my nerve and stood  
100 by while all this was going on."

The account of these events had completely drained him. His face looked pale and drawn. He walked slowly back to his chair and sat down and buried his head in his hands. And so he sat, for a long, long time.

I wanted to say something, but I could think of nothing that would not seem  
105 fatuous.<sup>1</sup> For nothing I could say would alter a particle of what had happened on that hot and desperate afternoon. And sympathy, I sensed, was the last thing he wanted at this moment. I sat helpless, not knowing what to do, when suddenly a line of poetry that I had heard or read once, but whose source I could not immediately recall, forced itself into my consciousness. *After such knowledge, what*  
110 *forgiveness?* I almost said it aloud but checked myself at the last moment. I did not want to judge them, neither Theodore Stappler nor Joseph Held.

Henry Kreisel

Canadian writer and professor of English at the University of Alberta  
until his death in 1990.

<sup>1</sup>fatuous—silly, pointless, purposeless



**VIII. Questions 65 to 70 in your Questions Booklet are based on this poem.**

**THE WASPS' NEST**

All day to the loose tile behind the parapet  
The droning bombers fled: in the wet gutter  
Belly-upwards the dead were lying, numbered  
By October cold. And now the bloat Queen,  
5 Sick-orange, with wings draped, and feelers trailing,  
Like Helen<sup>1</sup> combing her hair, posed on the ledge  
Twenty feet above the traffic. I watched, just a foot  
From her eyes, very glad of the hard glass parting  
My pressed human nose from her angry sting  
10 And her heavy power to warm the cold future  
Sunk in unfertilised eggs. And I thought: if I reached  
And inched this window open, and cut her in half  
With my unclashed pen-knife, I could exterminate  
An unborn generation. All next summer,  
15 If she survives, the stepped roof will swarm  
With a jam of striped fighters. Therefore, this winter  
In burning sulphur in their dug-out hangars  
All the bred wasps must die. Unless I kill her.  
So I balanced assassination with genocide  
20 As the queen walked on the ledge, a foot from my eyes  
In the last sun of the year, the responsible man  
With a cold nose, who knew that he must kill,  
Coming to no sure conclusion, nor anxious to come.

*George MacBeth*  
Contemporary English poet

<sup>1</sup>Helen—in Greek legend, the wife of the King of Sparta, renowned for her beauty and for being the central cause of the Trojan war, in that the Greeks set sail to recover her after she was abducted by Paris of Troy

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# *English 30: Part B*

## *January 1994*

